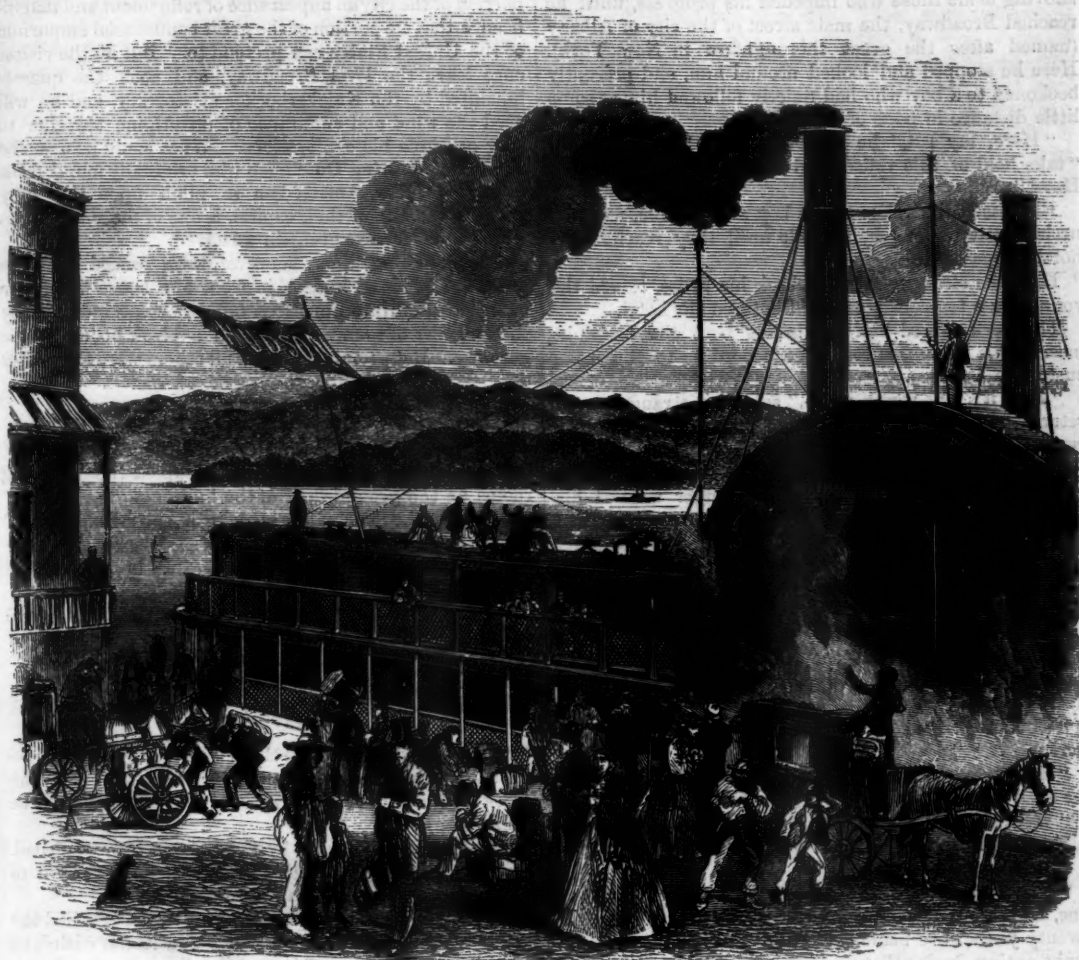


THE LEISURE HOUR

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"REHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Cooper.*



ON THE WHARF AT ALBANY.

THE GREAT VAN BROEK PROPERTY.

AN AMERICAN STORY.

CHAPTER I.—MR. JULIUS VAN BROEK MAKES AN UNEXPECTED APPEARANCE IN THE LAND-AGENTS' OFFICE.

ONE fine afternoon in the summer of the year 184— the customary crowd of idlers, hotel-touters, cab-drivers, and carmen, and boys of various ages, eager to earn a few cents out of any chance job that might come to hand, were collected on the wharf at Albany, the capital of the State of New York, to watch the arrival of the steamboat which had left New York city at an early

hour that morning. The boat was crowded with passengers, and as soon as she came to her berth alongside the wharf, the usual scene of bustle and confusion ensued. Habitual and well-seasoned travellers coolly entered the omnibus sent from the hotel at which they intended to put up, or walked off quietly with their valises or carpet-bags, undisturbed by the touters and *gamins*, who recognised such travellers at a glance. But strangers, and foreigners, and unprotected females were regarded as lawful prey, and were surrounded by cab-drivers who offered to convey them to any part of the city, and beset on all sides by agents who urged the superior excel-

lence of this or that hotel, and by pertinacious urchins who insisted upon carrying their baggage* whether they would or no, and who were with difficulty prevented from snatching it out of their hands, until at length the unfortunate victims grew bewildered, and were led away in triumph by their persecutors wheresoever the latter chose to convey them. One passenger, however—a tall, handsome, well-dressed gentleman, apparently about forty years of age, with dark hair, whiskers, and moustache, whose features were those of an American, though his sunburnt complexion betokened that he had lived for a long time in a tropical clime, and whose baggage consisted solely of a small valise which he carried in his hand—pushed vigorously through the crowd, forcibly shoving aside those who impeded his progress, until he reached Broadway, the main street of the city of Albany (named after the great thoroughfare in New York). Here he stopped and looked around him, and presently beckoned to a boy who had quietly followed him at some little distance in hope of a job.

"Here, my lad," he said, when the boy drew near; "take hold of this valise, and follow me to Donovan's Hotel."

He passed the valise to the boy as he spoke, and the urchin trotted along by his side until they reached the hotel in question.

Here the stranger received back his valise, tossed the youngster a ten-cent piece, and entered the hotel.

The clerk offered him the visitors' book, that he might inscribe his name and residence, according to the usual custom in America.

"No; it's not worth while," said the stranger. "I return to New York by the night boat. Show me to a room that I may wash my hands."

A waiter was summoned, and ordered to show the gentleman to No. 42, where the stranger washed his hands, made some slight change in his dress, and then returned to the office and handed his valise to the hotel clerk. "Take charge of that valise for me," he said, "until it's time to go down to the wharf. At seven o'clock the boat starts, doesn't it?"

The clerk nodded assent.

"And now," continued the stranger, "I want you to direct me, by the nearest way, to the office of Messrs. Nettletop and Swoop."

"The lawyers and land-agents, sir?" inquired the clerk.

"Exactly so; the lawyers and land-agents," answered the stranger.

"Well, sir—the nearest way—are you acquainted with Albany, sir?"

The stranger smiled.

"Twenty years ago," he replied, "I knew every street, lane, and alley; ay, almost every stone in the streets. Twenty years have made some difference in the city, no doubt, as time during that period has made some difference in me. But I hardly think I should lose myself in Albany, even on the darkest night."

"In that case, sir, you had better cross Broadway, and take the narrow street right opposite; follow the street to the end, then turn to the left until you get into State Street; that will lead you to the Capitol, and right opposite the Treasury Department you will find Messrs. Nettletop and Swoop's office. That way will be nearer than if you keep down Broadway to the Post Office, and then climb the whole length of the steep hill to the Capitol."

"Thank you," said the stranger; and, quitting the hotel, he crossed the broad thoroughfare, and, turning into the narrow street pointed out by the clerk, was soon lost to sight.

He had a long and fatiguing walk before him at the best. Albany is a large and handsome city, finely situated at a point where the Hudson river is no longer navigable to shipping. The Capitol, which stands on the summit of a steep hill, and commands an extensive and beautiful prospect of the surrounding country, far surpasses any public building in New York, alike in its imposing appearance and in its architectural elegance and purity; and the surrounding capacious Government offices and handsome private mansions impart to this portion of the city an appearance of refinement and magnificence that no portion of the great commercial emporium of the United States can pretend to. But let the visitor once leave the level Broadway, and seek the quarter inhabited by the Knickerbocker aristocracy, and he will need the wind and endurance of an Alpine traveller to long continue his explorations. What could possess the obese, slow-moving Dutchmen who originally founded the colony of Nieuw Amsterdam to pitch upon this hilly spot for the site of their capital, is one of those mysteries which must for ever remain unsolved.

The active stranger, however, soon passed over the ground, and found himself in front of a house which was partitioned off into numerous offices, as was indicated by the long list of names painted on a black board in the gateway. But prominent above all others were the names of—

"MESSRS. NETTLETOP AND SWOOP,

ATTORNEYS, SOLICITORS, LAND-AGENTS, ETC., ETC., ETC.,"

while a gilded ~~64~~, pointing towards the main entrance, indicated that these gentlemen occupied the principal rooms on the ground-floor of the building.

Entering the door, which stood open, the stranger found himself in the presence of half a dozen clerks, who were seated on high stools at a long desk, all busily engaged in writing.

"I wish," he said, "to see Messrs. Nettletop and Swoop;" addressing the clerks generally.

"Mr. Swoop is in the private office, sir," replied one of the clerks; "Mr. Nettletop is at Schenectady, superintending the erection of a new house on the Van Broek property."

"Oh, indeed! Ah, yes—the Van Broek property," replied the stranger. "It's an extensive estate—this Van Broek property. How far may its nearest boundary be from Albany?"

"About fifty miles, sir, by the Schenectady Railroad. If you will favour me with your name, I will take it to Mr. Swoop, who will be happy to see you."

"My name? No; never mind my name," replied the stranger. "Tell Mr. Swoop that a gentleman wishes to see him upon business of importance."

The clerk delivered the message, and presently returned and said—

"Will you step into the private office, sir? Mr. Swoop is disengaged at present, and will be happy to see you." The stranger followed the clerk into an inner office, the walls of which were completely covered with plain and coloured plans, plates, and drawings of different portions of the great Van Broek property. Maps and plans, on various different scales, of the farms and roads, and building-lots, and woods and forests, and streams and water-courses on the estates, were spread out upon the tables and strewn over the floor. A range of shelves which occupied one side of the room was filled with japanned boxes, labelled "Leases, Van Broek Estates;"

* "Baggage" is the term used throughout the United States when luggage of any description is spoken of.

"Claims, Van Broek Estates;" "Mortgages, Van Broek Estates," etc., etc., etc. Truly it appeared that the management of this vast property engrossed the time and attention of the land-agents to the comparative neglect of all other business.

Mr. Swoop was seated at a desk, pencil and compass in hand, intently studying a plan that lay before him, and comparing it with another plan on a minor scale by its side. He was a short, stout man, about sixty years of age, with a florid complexion, and with a good-humoured expression of countenance; though the quick, keen glance of his small, restless, gray eyes, and a habitual nervous twitching of the corners of his mouth, impressed one with the notion that he was keenly alive to his own interests. His head was bald at the temples and on the crown; his face was clean shaven; and he was clothed in a professional suit of black, and wore a limp, loose white neck-cloth, in the folds of which his fat double chin was completely buried.

He received the stranger in the most complaisant manner (speaking, however, in a voice that was too soft and wheedling in its tones to be agreeable), and begged him to be seated.

The visitor complied; but, before he could sit down, he had to remove the plan of a road across some fields, which occupied the nearest chair, all the other chairs in the room being similarly occupied.

"You appear to be fully employed in the supervision of these large estates, Mr. Swoop," said the stranger, as he seated himself in the chair.

"They are a great charge, sir; I may say, a *very* great and onerous charge," replied the lawyer, rubbing his hands together in a manner expressive of intense enjoyment, as if he rather liked the onerous duties of which he complained. "We are always doing the best we can," he went on, "exerting ourselves to the utmost to improve the property for the benefit of the heirs at law—when they are found, Mr. P.—he-hem. My clerk did not mention your name, sir."

"No matter just now," replied the stranger. "The fact is, I have called to make some inquiries relative to this property. It is entirely under your management at present, I believe?"

"Entirely, sir; and you could not have called at a more favourable time. We have been effecting great improvements of late, and should you wish to take a lease, you may do so just now on most advantageous terms. There are some excellent farms not yet taken up, and several really superior sites for the erection of mills to be worked by water-power. The water-power on the property is unequalled in any part of the State of New York. There are extensive sand and gravel pits near the north-western boundary, which a gentleman possessed of a little spare capital might work to great advantage. Perhaps, sir, you would like to look at some of our plans?"

"Thank you, no; not at present," replied the stranger; "though I may wish to examine your plans and drawings, or even to go over the property, before long. Just now I have called more especially to ask for some information relative to the presumed heir or co-heirs of this vast property. Have you received any fresh information of late?"

"None, sir; none," replied the lawyer, in an affected tone of disappointment. "There were hopes at one time that the great grandson of the old patroon Cornelius Van Broek might be discovered. But all our endeavours to trace him ended in disappointment, and now we have every reason to believe that he died abroad many years ago."

"If that be the case, the family is, I presume, extinct?"

"Exactly so, providing he left no issue, and if the descendants of the junior branches of the family are also deceased; and as, if the reports we have heard be correct, the lineal descendant died while quite a youth, and unmarried, the probability is that—as you observe—the family is extinct."

"And in that case?"

"In that case, of course, the property would fall to the State; but not until after a long lapse of years, unless positive proof can be adduced of the death of the heir or heirs at law."

"But is it equally probable that the descendants of the collateral branches of the family are extinct?"

"It is believed that they are. There were two great-grand-nephews of the old patroon—a sort of far-off cousins of the direct heir's—wild, dissipated young men, who have not been heard of for many years, and who, in all probability, are dead. Of course, if living, they, or one of them, rather, would now be the heir to the property. But, even if such claim were made, we should require most convincing proofs of the death of the direct heir; which, although the fact is almost positive, would be difficult to prove."

"I have heard," continued the stranger, "that this great-grandson of Cornelius Van Broek's went to sea when a mere lad. Is it so?"

"So it is believed," replied the lawyer. "The boy's parents died in Pennsylvania, in great poverty, leaving their only child, then an infant, utterly destitute. The child was adopted by an old servant of the family, who took pity upon his destitute condition, and at a proper age he was sent to sea. He never—so far as is known—returned to the United States."

"But," said the stranger, "supposing that he *should* return, and put in his claim to the property of his great-grandfather? You will understand that I am putting the case to you as a lawyer for my own information. Supposing he should return (he would still be, comparatively speaking, a young man), and I had taken a lease from *you*, and had gone to great expense in the erection of mills or other buildings, or in any way had laid out money upon the property: how could I be satisfied that he would ratify your agreements? How could I be certain that I should not be compelled to give up my lease, or to leave behind me the mills or other buildings I had erected, without being entitled to claim the slightest compensation? Such an event *might* occur, and in such case might involve me, and others besides me, in one common ruin."

The lawyer smiled.

"If that is the only reason that deters you from taking a lease, sir, or that causes you to hesitate to make an investment which cannot fail to prove highly advantageous, I assure you that your fears are groundless. In the first place, your supposition is very improbable. I may, indeed, tell you—in confidence—that it is the next thing to impossible; for we possess almost certain proofs of the young man's death, though we have our own reasons for not bringing them forward at present. Then, again, should the heir present himself, and make good his title (and he would find that a difficult task), I have not the least doubt that he would be glad, for his own sake, to hold binding any agreements or settlements that had been made by us in his behalf."

"You speak confidently, Mr. Swoop," replied the stranger. "But it is idle to beat about the bush in this fashion. You asked to know my name. I will tell it you." He rose from his seat as he spoke, and stood

confronting the lawyer. "I, sir, am Julius Van Broek, the great-grandson and only living descendant of the old patroon Cornelius Van Broek. I am the sole heir to Van Broek Manor, and all the property thereunto appertaining, and I do not think that I shall find it a very difficult task to prove my title to the estates of my forefathers. If, sir, you will glance over this document" (he handed the lawyer a folded paper as he spoke), "you will perhaps be of the same opinion. It is a copy, a copy merely," he added, emphasizing the word *copy*: "the original is in the hands of my own lawyer."

Mr. Swoop's rosy face became pale as ashes. His hands trembled so that he could hardly unfold the paper, and a choking sensation in his throat almost stifled his breath. But he struggled against his agitation, and read the document slowly twice over. He held the paper open in his trembling hands, and glanced furtively over it at his visitor with an expression of countenance that betrayed his wish that he could annihilate him on the spot. His fingers tingled with a desire to tear the document to atoms. But then it was but a copy, and, even had it been the original, its destruction might have been unsafe while its owner lived to bring fresh proofs of his identity. He felt that even to betray his own feelings might be injurious to him, and that, until the stranger's claim was really made good, there was yet hope. Controlling his feelings, therefore, with a strong effort, he said, as soon as he could find breath to speak—

"I am really, truly glad—that is, we shall be most happy, Mr. Nettletop and I, to see you restored—that is, I should say, placed in possession of the family estates. I—I beg that you will resume your seat, Mr. Van Broek. It sounds strange," he added, "to address the name to a living person after so many years."

The stranger, whom I may in future style Mr. Julius Van Broek, resumed his seat.

"May I ask," continued the lawyer, "whether you have—though of course you must have—other proofs and witnesses besides this document?"

"Sufficient proofs and witnesses will be forthcoming if you think it necessary to demand them, Mr. Swoop," replied Mr. Van Broek.

"My dear sir, you misunderstand me," answered the lawyer, who had now sufficiently controlled his agitation to speak in his usual tone of voice.

"It is not for myself, nor for Mr. Nettletop, that I speak; but you must be aware, however perfectly we may be assured of your identity, that, where such a vast property is concerned, the courts will demand that the strictest investigations shall be made."

"I can only repeat that ample proofs of my identity and of my rightful claim will be forthcoming when called for," said Mr. Van Broek.

"And why, my dear sir," the lawyer asked, in an insinuating tone of voice—"why did you not make your existence known to us in the first place? I think it would have been the better plan, we being agents for the property, and having made so many efforts to discover the heir. Besides, it might have saved you much trouble."

"I might answer that I had reasons of my own," said Mr. Van Broek; "but really I had not. I had but a vague idea, until comparatively lately, of the existence of the property, and the lawyer whose name is appended to that document was chosen by me merely by chance."

"You have been abroad, I presume, all these years?"

"I have been in India many years. In fact, I only arrived in New York, from Calcutta, on Thursday fort-

night, the 10th inst., on board the 'Montezuma,' Captain Higsby. Do you wish to ask any further questions, Mr. Swoop?"

"No, sir," replied the lawyer. "To tell you the truth, Mr. Van Broek, this information, coming to me so suddenly and unexpectedly, has taken me by surprise; and I cannot but think that it would have been only courteous on the part of your own lawyer to have acquainted us with the facts that he must have been cognisant of for some time."

"That rests between you and him, Mr. Swoop. You will acknowledge that I have lost little time before visiting you. I might have written you a few days earlier, certainly; but I considered that a personal interview would be more satisfactory on both sides; and again I assure you that until a short time before I left India—though I have held some vague notions since my early childhood that I was entitled to the possession of large property, from which I was debarred by some, to me, mysterious means—I knew neither the nature of that property, nor where it was situated, nor that you were in any way connected with it."

"Of course, sir, you are now aware that it is through the consequences of a tedious course of litigation that the estates have been so long held in abeyance, and through no act of mine or of Mr. Nettletop's, nor, indeed, of any private individual's?"

"The facts have all been explained to me, Mr. Swoop. I blame the tedious action of the law, arising, in the first place, out of its unsettled state in relation to landed property, and nothing and no one else. And now, sir, I have nothing further to say, except that I am happy to have had the pleasure to meet you, and that I shall instruct my lawyers to communicate with you relative to the arrangement of my affairs as soon as possible, and I trust to you to assist them to the utmost of your ability in bringing matters to a speedy settlement."

The lawyer bowed, and Mr. Van Broek continued—

"I must now wish you good day, as I return to New York by the night boat which leaves the wharf, I believe, at seven o'clock. It is now" (looking at his watch) "nearly six. The copy of the document I placed in your hands you may keep. Mr. Nettletop may wish to see it. I will write to you, or probably wait upon you again, in a few days. Meanwhile, here is my card. Any communication you make by letter to me will reach me at that address."

He handed the lawyer his card as he spoke, shook hands with him, and, again wishing him "Good day," quitted the office, and returned to the hotel where he had left his valise.

"A cool hand, that, and a determined fellow, I should say, if I'm any judge of physiognomy," muttered lawyer Swoop as he stood at the door of his office watching the retreating form of his unexpected, and apparently unwelcome visitor, as long as he remained in sight; "one, I should say, whom it would be dangerous to attempt to play tricks with, if he has firm ground to stand upon; and it really looks like it;" and he again perused the document left with him by his visitor. "Yet he does not in the least 'favour' any of the portraits of the sleepy-headed Van Broeks that I have seen. However, that may well be: he's of long descent from them if he be the great-grandson of the last patroon, and I should say he's led an active and very different kind of life from theirs." He glanced at the card the stranger had handed him. "Julius Van Broek," he said; "and written in pencil beneath, 'Astor House, New York.'"

The lawyer returned to his office, and, reseating himself in his accustomed easy-chair, gave himself over to a fit of musing.

"It's very annoying, to say the least of it," he soliloquized, or rather thought aloud; "and very awkward just now. I wonder what Nettletop will say!" And, notwithstanding his own evident vexation, there was something so ludicrous to him in the thought of what Nettletop would say, that he actually laughed aloud, though there was a strange bitterness in the tone of his merriment.

Presently a fresh thought struck him, and he touched a small hand-bell that stood on his desk.

One of the clerks responded to the summons.

"Barton," said the lawyer, "run round to the 'Phoenix,' and ask them to lend you the 'New York Shipping and Passenger List,' from—yes—from the 5th or 6th of this month. Be smart, now." The clerk disappeared, and in a few minutes returned with the "List" in question.

"That'll do, Barton," said the lawyer. "I'll call you to take it back in a few minutes."

He cast his eyes over the "List."

"Let me think. Ha! Thursday, the 10th, he said. Here it is: 'Montezuma,' Higsby, master; from Calcutta, February 12th. Arrived at New York, Thursday, June 10th. Passenger List.' Hem! all New York mercantile names. No Van Broek—yes; here it is, sure enough: 'Julius Van Broek.' The very last name in the list. Well, so far he has told the truth." Again he touched the bell.

"When does the mail close for Schenectady?" he asked of the clerk who appeared at his summons.

"At half-past six, sir."

"At half-past six! It's nearly that now?"

"Wants five minutes, sir. But if I take the letter to the dépôt by seven o'clock, it will go by paying three cents extra."

"Very good. Run back to the 'Phoenix' with this 'List,' Barton, and when you return I'll have a letter for you to take to the dépôt."

The letter was soon ready. Mr. Swoop wrote only a few lines. "That will bring him to Albany fast enough," he said, as he folded the letter, and directed it to "Jabez Nettletop, Esq., Van Broek Manor, near Schenectady, N.Y." "I never trust explanations to black and white," he muttered to himself, "when a *viva voce* explanation can be given. We lawyers ought to know, if anybody does, the mischief that frequently arises from a too free use of pen, ink, and paper."

The clerk was despatched to the dépôt with the letter on his return from the "Phoenix," and then Mr. Swoop quitted his office in no very cheerful mood, and went home to his private dwelling.

NEW YEAR'S DAY IN GERMANY.

Of all the days in the year which bear a name of distinction, none is so much overlooked in England as New Year's day. Business is carried on the same on the first of January as on any other ordinary day, and business people wear as anxious an expression then as at any other time.

But it is very different on the Continent, and especially in Germany, where a large proportion of the population hold appointments under government. The incomes, though small, being more certain than in this country, "to-morrow takes care of itself," therefore all holidays are welcome, and New Year's day is a long-

anticipated pleasure, entirely devoted to complimentary visits. These, according to custom, are exchanged between friends and relations, and are expected to be paid to all superiors; by the latter are meant staff-officers, and "chefs de bureaux," who rigorously demand this mark of respect from their subordinates.

Among those who look anxiously forward to New Year's day is the young *employé*, who has been hitherto working *unpaid*, but whom this day may invest with an income. As the new year generally brings some change or other for the better, the senior clerk also expects either an increase of salary, or else "eine Gratification," a new year's gift from government. The value of this gift varies according to the recipient's position. Though always moderate, it is found by many a paterfamilias useful in paying his Christmas bills.

New Year's day in Germany is merely kept as a day of amusement; it bears no religious character officially or by authority, coming so soon after Christmas, which is considered a great Church festival among all denominations. By old-established custom the holiday begins on the eve of New Year's day, which the Germans call "der Sylvester Abend." To dance from the old year into the new one is thought no unbecoming occupation by the young and thoughtless, who fancy their cheerfulness for the coming year "settled" by this act. Consequently a number of public balls are given in every town of any pretension, besides several *thés dansants*; the latter sometimes on New Year's day, the former on the evening preceding it. These *réunions* are, as a rule, exceedingly stiff and uninteresting in Germany, except on this particular occasion, when all parties unbend for once. Ladies and gentlemen, who during the whole twelve months merely exchange bows, shake hands when the clock strikes twelve, wishing each other a happy new year.

In those families where life is regarded as having higher purposes than mere business and amusement, New Year's eve is celebrated in a more homely but certainly not less happy manner. It is the only evening in the year when the children are allowed to sit up, in order to see the new year come in. The evening is spent in social enjoyment, not forgetting hot punch for the seniors, and cakes for the young. At the family altar the voice of thanksgiving is heard for the mercies of the past year, with prayer for God's blessing for the new year. When the watchman on the church-tower sounds his horn, according to German custom, to proclaim midnight, all wish each other a happy new year, and go to bed.

The watchman's place on the church-tower is no sine-cure; for, in addition to his being obliged to blow his horn at every hour after eleven, until four or five in the morning, he has to peer in all directions in search of fires, which, from his elevated position, he cannot fail to perceive. Happily they are very scarce, especially since the police regulations provide that every man's chimney shall be swept at least once in every six weeks, whether he likes it or not. Should, however, such an unfortunate event as a fire take place, the watchman keeps blowing his horn until the population is thoroughly aroused. In some towns of Germany the watchman perambulates the streets while blowing the horn; at the same time informing the people in which direction their assistance is wanted. Engines being unknown in most parts of Germany, every spectator is expected to act the part of an "extinguisher," by passing the bucket to his neighbour in the "cordon" which is formed.

In many a quaint little town, where few innovations have yet found their way, the watchman walks about,

calling at the end of every hour, in a monotonous voice—

"Ihr Herrn und Damen laßt euch sagen,
Die Glocke hat zwölf Uhr geschlagen;
Löschet aus das Feuer und das Licht,
Damit Niemand ein Schaden geschieht."

"Lords and ladies, hear me tell,
Twelve has struck upon the bell;
Rake out the fire, put out the light,
That none may come to harm this night."

In some places on the "Haut Rhin," where French is spoken as well as German, the watchman sings to a pretty, though rather sad melody the following words:

"Onze heures ont sonnées:
Tous vos feux éteignez!
Pour les âmes trépassées,
Priez! Priez!"

"Eleven o'clock has passed away:
Extinguish all your fires, I pray,
And for the souls of sinful clay
Pray! pray!"

During the whole year the poor watchman is a mystery—never, or very rarely, seen, except by the dissolute—respectable people of all classes being in the habit of going to bed very early in Germany. On New Year's day, however, a very sleepy-looking individual will sometimes make his appearance, and, while modestly introducing himself, will wish the family every happiness, in return for which he invariably meets with a gift.

On the first morning of the new year all is bustle in the town: music on the parade-ground, where there is one, music at all the inns and hotels, music in every street; while people are seen running about busily, bent on making morning calls. On these occasions, "the compliments of the season" being over, a whole string of minor wishes for the coming year follow; then the news of the day is discussed, after this perhaps a little scandal hatched, and the friends separate. The climate in Germany being less changeable than in England, it usually happens about the end of the year that a long-continued frost has changed the ornamental waters which surround the public walks into sheets of thick ice. New Year's day being a holiday for all, crowds of people of every age and condition may be seen skating. The moving figures produce the effect of a kaleidoscope, on account of the many-coloured uniforms mixed with the civilians' dress.

Another amusement for New Year's day is sledge-driving, which, under certain conditions, is only accessible to the rich. Not only is a sledge a comparatively useless article, which must lie idle more than three parts of the year, but, moreover, to make a creditable appearance, fashion prescribes that much of a German lady's fortune should be invested in furs. The sledge being open on either side so as to display the whole figure, the lady is left unprotected from the cold unless enveloped in warm wrappers. The same may be said of her cavalier, who, sitting behind her on a narrow seat, guides the horse, much in the same manner that the driver of a hansom cab does his. In spite of the costliness of the furs, the horse is the gayest of the whole party, having, in addition to a beautiful covering with red trimmings, a number of bells about the head and neck to announce his approach.

When, as frequently happens at this season, the large river which connects some of the villages with the town gets frozen, regular sledge parties are organised to drive on the ice and through the town on New Year's day. They are very gay in appearance, and, though only intended as an amusement for a select few, are useful in establishing a path on the ice for the country-people,

who cross the river in a ferry-boat at other times. These are the peasants who daily come into town to supply the population with the produce of their garden and dairy.

Immediately before Christmas and New Year's day they bring from the forests with which Germany abounds some very beautiful evergreens, berries, and moss; the two former as substitutes for flowers, the latter to form a miniature lawn beneath the Christmas tree. This tree having been so often described shall only be mentioned here in connection with the moss. The last-named article is used, however, for a more important purpose. In a country like Germany, where the winter is so very severe as to make double windows necessary, it is of the utmost consequence to keep out the cold air. In order to do this effectually, the window-frames are covered on both sides with rows of moss, which latter being glued on, withstands all atmospheric influences, and forms a screen which, besides excluding the cold, looks quite ornamental.

As a rule, all things for domestic purposes are brought from the country by the women, these being the working bees. The peasants in Germany are a peculiar type of people, exceedingly coarse in appearance; and, owing to the constant exposure to the sun, the women are very plain.* They wear no bonnets, but tie a large square coloured handkerchief over the head, which square, being folded double, forms what the French call "un fanchon." This, when worn far back on the head, looks well enough; but, ignorant of feminine graces, these peasant-women bring it so far forward as to cover the whole forehead, thereby rendering their appearance still less prepossessing. On Sundays, when going to church, they wear their hair in a "chignon," and over this a cap of beautiful lace. The shape of this cap varies according to the locality; and, the lace being very expensive, it is only worn on solemn occasions, passing from one generation to another as an heirloom. These coarse-looking women make capital wives for their lazy husbands, who, conscious of their dignity as "lords of the creation," spend their time leisurely in sleeping and smoking. The women milk the cows, sell the milk, work in the fields, fetch wood, sand, and moss from the forest, carry the vegetables to market, cook the dinner, and, to finish the day worthily, bring home on their heads enormous loads of clover for their cattle, these being mostly stable-fed.

Instead of the Christmas-boxes given away in this country, it is customary in Germany to distribute New Year's gifts among servants and others. As regards the tradespeople, a rather primitive custom prevails, they sending presents to their customers. Thus the mistress of a family will receive on New Year's day, besides her children's congratulatory letters, a number of curiously-shaped buns or a cake from the baker, a parcel of dried fruits from the grocer, a large sausage from the pork-butcher, and other appropriate articles, the value of which is enhanced by the respectful way in which they are offered. The donor, however, is no loser in the end by this liberality, as no lady would think of changing her tradesman after having accepted a new year's present from him.

It is the custom all over Germany to have "Jahrmärkte" at different seasons of the year; and for this purpose a number of booths are erected in some open square, many traders making long journeys in order to sell their wares. Though called "foires" by the French, these "Jahrmärkte" bear little resemblance to an English fair, such as these have become in our time. A

* This ungallant sentence requires us to explain that the author of the paper is a German lady, whose father was a distinguished Professor at Bonn University.—Ed. L. H.

German fair is a fit promenade for the *élite* of the town, as well as for others. In spring the four double rows of booths standing on the outside of the square are furnished with every requisite for summer wear, while the open space behind them is generally occupied by a travelling menagerie, a conjurer's tent, and a roundabout for children.

In winter, when more substantial attractions are wanted for the visitors to the fair, the booths display heaps of furs and warm wrappers. On the eve of St. Nicholas, Christmas, and New Year's day they are chiefly distinguished by an extensive collection of toys from Nuremberg. The booth which, as a rule, attracts much notice is the one presided over by a Tyrolean family in their national costume. Naturally a fine race, they look to great advantage side by side with some inhabitants of the "Schwarzwald," or Black Forest, whose appearance favours the supposition of their being the lineal descendants of the mischievous "Rübezahl and his Kobolds," who are said to have intermarried with them. The Thuringians have pipes and other articles carved in wood for sale; the Tyrolese some beautiful kid-gloves of the most delicate colours, well suited for New Year's gifts.

I may add a few words on some of the other festival days in Germany. Pentecost is celebrated by a musical festival in one of the towns on the Rhine, to which Germans from the remotest parts of their "Vaterland" flock. Most of the holidays are set apart for the amusement of children, though at the same time observed by the parents as religious festivals; for instance, at Easter it is customary to distribute a number of hard-boiled eggs among the children, the shells of which eggs have been coloured during the process of boiling. In order to obtain a fine yellow, the eggs, when put into boiling water, are wrapped up in the peels of onions; when wanted red, they are boiled in beetroot juice; and to dye them purple, logwood is put into the water. As the shell only gets stained, the eggs are eaten in the end; but previously to this the children amuse themselves by "tapping," which is knocking two eggs together by way of trying their strength. Generally one breaks by the experiment; then the owner of the strongest egg wins the broken one; and when both break simultaneously, it is considered a drawn game.

On St. Martin's eve, or "Martini," as the Germans call it, the boys, forming processions, perambulate the streets at night, each carrying a large pumpkin fastened to a pole. These pumpkins, after having been made hollow, so as to admit a light inside, have to undergo a process of carving, which the mamma or elder sister does with a penknife, commonly producing representations of sun, moon, and stars. This is done on the outside, and sufficiently deep to show the light through the thin skin left; by this means producing an effect similar to a Chinese-lantern.

The origin of this custom is veiled in obscurity, though there is a legend about St. Martin, who, having been very fond of children, used to fatten a number of geese for their especial benefit; so that whenever a hungry little orphan applied to him for a dinner, he instantly gathered some vegetables in his garden and roasted a goose. Whether there be any foundation for this legend or not, it is certain that Germans of all classes of society eat goose on St. Martin's day, and none at Michaelmas. It seems inconsistent, notwithstanding the many grateful reminiscences we have of geese, that they should still be regarded as emblems of stupidity. Whatever Niebuhr or Bunsen may have said to the contrary, every one knows that by their prudent watchfulness and timely

cackling Rome was once saved. If this be true, the poor geese are very hardly dealt with, and common justice demands that they should be at least put on a par with the cranes, who are held sacred everywhere throughout Germany. Schiller, in "Die Kraniche des Ibis," tells us how a certain Greek named Ibisus, who was always accompanied by his favourite cranes, was waylaid and murdered. The cranes, being the only witnesses to this foul deed, were determined not to let the murderer escape. Consequently they followed him everywhere, until by hovering above him they brought him to justice, and gained a character for wisdom, while the poor geese are abused for stupidity.

Another partial holiday for German children is St. Nicholas' day, though only regarded as such among the Catholic population. St. Nicholas was, according to the legend, a pious bishop, exceedingly fond of studious children, whom he rewarded, but he was rather severe with regard to the idle. The belief that, in order to fulfil his mission, he still visits the earth on every recurring anniversary, is encouraged among the juveniles, who become very industrious and gentle as the day draws near. To carry conviction still farther, one member of the family will frequently dress himself up in the episcopal garb to represent St. Nicholas, and after catechising the children will boldly distribute presents among them. As a rule, however, the children before going to bed place each an empty dish on the table, which on rising they find filled; the industrious with cakes and fruit, the idle with a birch. This, together with Christmas, concludes the list of holidays in Germany, until the day comes when they again wish each other a happy New Year.

RICHARD COBDEN.

RICHARD COBDEN was born at the farmhouse of Dunford, near Midhurst, on the 3rd of June, 1804. At the free grammar-school of this quaint but clean and well-built Sussex market town, so pleasantly situated on the right bank of the Rother, he received the rudiments of his education. Speaking in the House of Commons during the free-trade agitation, Cobden claimed a right to stand up as the farmer's friend, on the ground that he was himself the son of a Sussex farmer, and descended from Sussex yeomen. But the story of his ancestry will best be given in words which he spoke to a friend when walking with him in the beautiful country near Dunford House about a year before his death. "Our family," he said, on the occasion referred to, "has resided in this neighbourhood for a good many generations. Years ago my brother and I found a number of papers which had been thrown aside as lumber, and were used as waste paper, which, when we came to examine them, proved to be old family documents. By these we could trace the Cobdens as having lived at Midhurst for two hundred years, and there was always a Richard Cobden among them. Formerly there was a small manufactory of hosiery in the town, with which they appear to have been connected. My grandfather was an energetic and prosperous man. He was a maltster at Midhurst, and almost always the bailiff (i.e., the mayor) of the town, and took rather a notable part in county matters. My father took to farming at an unfortunate time. He was most amiable and kind-hearted, but not a man of business, and things did not prosper with him. But my mother was a woman of great energy of character."

While Cobden was still young his father died, and the boy was sent to London to the care of an uncle, who employed him in his warehouse. Soon, however, he

seems to have left the employment of his uncle for another situation in the same department of trade. Here his quickness, integrity, and energy secured for him the favourable notice of his employers, and he was ere long advanced from the counting-room and the

favourably of the trio, agreed to let them have it for Mr. Cobden's £500—would Mr. Lewis still let him have the money? This gentleman very kindly complied, and the three shortly after began the world together. The borrowed money was speedily repaid; and, after a few



RICHARD COBDEN'S BIRTHPLACE.

warehouse to the post of traveller for the establishment. Successful in obtaining orders, owing no doubt to his frankness, affability, and business tact, he was noted in the commercial room for his pleasant, kindly, and modest manner, and became popular among his brethren of the "road."

When he was acting as traveller, it happened that a firm desired to retire, and were willing to dispose of their business on very favourable terms. The account of the circumstances connected with this transaction, so honourable to Mr. Cobden and to all parties concerned, has been supplied by a correspondent of the "Manchester Courier." "Among those," says this writer, "whom Mr. Cobden visited on the part of the firm with which he was connected was Mr. John Lewis, of 101, Oxford Street. Mr. Lewis conceived a liking for the young man, on account of the smart and business-like manner in which he used to come to his house and transact whatever he had to do, and often gave him a few kind words. One day young Cobden came to him, and, with some hesitation, told him that he and two of his comrades, young men like himself, had heard of a business near Manchester which a gentleman was retiring from, and the plant of which was to be had for £1500; this sum the three had agreed to raise among them; but Cobden had no friends to help him with his quota, and therefore he would venture to ask Mr. Lewis if he would do so. Mr. Lewis, from his partiality to him, at once assented, and Cobden left him in high spirits. But soon after he called again with a long face to say that his colleagues had not been able to raise their £500 each. After a while, however, he came again to state that the owner of the business in question, having heard

years, one and then another of the partners drew out of the business with a handsome fortune, and Richard Cobden came to be what he was." The foregoing particulars, the writer adds, were related to him by Mr. Lewis himself, who retired from business about twenty-five years ago, and subsequently died in Madeira.

Calico-printing was the business in which Cobden thus obtained a start. In his hands it proved, as has been observed, highly lucrative. The firm had three establishments, one near Clithero for printing the calicoes, and one in London, and another in Manchester for the sale of the goods. That in Manchester, known by the title of Richard Cobden and Company, was under the personal management of Mr. Cobden himself. The great success of the concern was mainly owing to his thorough knowledge of the trade, coupled with his good taste and business tact. Cobden's prints became famous and fashionable. But, while so engaged in matters of trade, and while travelling widely to open up a market for his goods, he was not less alive to the political events of the day. Under the signature of "Libra" he wrote a series of letters on public questions. The letters appeared in the "Manchester Times," and were so meritorious that they attracted the marked attention of the editors of that journal, who invited the unknown writer to meet them at their publishing-office; and at the time appointed Cobden accordingly presented himself. At the interview he is described as being diffident and somewhat nervous in temperament, although cordially received and highly complimented on the ability displayed by his letters. Before this time, a comparative stranger in Manchester, he was at once introduced to its leading political men, and even induced to make a

first public appearance at a meeting held to promote the incorporation of the town. Mr. Cobden's first attempt at oratory proved a failure; he became nervous and con-

any description, excepting, perhaps, an after-dinner one at a commercial table." It was not long, however, until he obtained command of his great powers as a public



Remain sincerely yours
R. Cobden

Midhurst 5 Oct 1862

fused, and all but broke down. This result but too truly realized his own fears; for it was not until he had been repeatedly pressed that he consented to speak. "I assure you," he said, "I never yet made a speech of

speaker. At the opening of the Manchester Athenæum, soon afterwards, he delivered the inaugural address, and made also several other public appearances on behalf of the movement for national education. At one of these

educational meetings he first met John Bright; and ere long a friendship was formed between them, founded on a community of sentiments and aims, and which in connection with the great free-trade struggle and the social and political progress of the country is destined to historic recognition.

Successful in business, energetic in the promotion of all objects on which the welfare of Manchester depended, and commanding attention by his knowledge and ability, it was befitting, on the incorporation of the town, that his fellow-citizens should confer on Cobden municipal honour. It was a distinction he had justly earned, and such as he no doubt adequately prized. As Mr. Alderman Cobden he took part in the formation of the Anti-Corn-law Association, the precursor of the more celebrated League, contributing a handsome sum to its funds. At an early period of his life Cobden had acquainted himself with the writings of Adam Smith, and had ardently adopted the views of the father of political economy as respects the free exchange of commodities. Hence, when public opinion was slowly gaining head as to the impolicy of the corn-laws, he was fully prepared to take an efficient part in an organized crusade against them. Prior to this period—in 1835—had appeared his pamphlet entitled "England, Ireland, and America, by a Manchester Manufacturer." The topics discussed are peace, non-intervention, retrenchment, and free-trade. The principles which throughout life he consistently advocated will be found laid down in the pages of this his first publication. Whatever hindered international intercourse, on which he saw so much of the progress and material comfort of peoples depended, he sought to remove. On this ground he steadily, though perhaps not always with equal discrimination, opposed war, interference in the affairs of other nations, large expenditure on armaments, and protective tariffs. It must, however, be fully allowed that his opposition, firm and vigorous as it always was, sprung from no party feeling or personal motive, but was largely disinterested and patriotic.

At the General Election in 1841 Mr. Cobden was returned to Parliament for Stockport. On the 25th of August of that year he delivered his maiden speech. It was mainly directed against the protective duty on corn. In reference to this first speech in Parliament his manner is described as "simple and earnest, his eloquence plain, ready, forcible, and of a kind eminently suited to his time and function, and wholly new in the House of Commons." This man, who owed his rise in life to his own exertions, and was already the recognised leader of the corn-law repeal movement, was speedily felt to be a power in Parliament. Proud of his origin as one of the people, and having no cause to be ashamed of the honest industry which had led to his advancement, he did not hesitate, when occasion served, to draw an argument from what was personal to himself. At one of the numerous League meetings of this period, when referring to the injurious effect of a protective policy on the condition of the country, he thus expressed himself:—"Beginning myself without one shilling besides what I derived from my own industry, I have pushed my way along; but I declare it my firm conviction that had I been left to commence my career at the present day, such is the state of trade, I could not have a chance of rising." It is not our purpose in this sketch to narrate the history of the Anti-Corn-law League, or even to recount Mr. Cobden's efforts on its behalf either within or without the walls of the House of Commons: suffice it to say they were not less continuous than energetic. He entered heart and soul into the great movement of the time, sacrificing to it his own pecuniary interests, and

lending to its advocacy all the resources of his gifted mind and persuasive eloquence.

Every one knows the circumstances—for now they are historical—under which the Leaguers proved victorious, and the corn-laws were repealed. It was the fortune of the writer to be present in the House of Commons when Sir Robert Peel, in 1846, made his last speech as a minister of the Crown, and, on his referring to the recent abrogation of the corn-laws, to hear these words fall from his lips: "The name which ought to be, and will be associated with the success of these measures, is the name of one who, acting, I believe, from pure and disinterested motives, has, with untiring energy, made appeals to our reason, and has enforced those appeals with an eloquence the more to be admired because it was unaffected and unadorned; the name which ought to be chiefly associated with the success of these measures is the name of RICHARD COBDEN." By way of supplement to this memorable eulogium from the great Conservative statesman on the merits of Cobden as a patriotic politician, we would add another testimony to his engaging qualities as a man by an intimate friend and associate in the labours of the free-trade movement. "In private life," says this friend, "we never met a more loveable man than Richard Cobden. He was mildness and gentleness and sympathetic courtesy personified. The natural refinement and modesty of his mind was visible in his countenance, and in his whole deportment. He had the happy art of drawing people about him, and of so making them his personal friends by the interest he took in them, and by the certainty with which he inspired them that his best advice was ever at their service. No one meeting Mr. Cobden for the first time would experience any difficulty in addressing him. There was that in his very look, which inspired confidence, and in his manner which conciliated more than passing good-will. He affected no superiority and claimed no deference, even when in communication with the poorest people. Nothing was easier to see than that Mr. Cobden thoroughly and heartily sympathized with the working-classes, and that he was constantly employed in desiring how he could best assist in elevating them in the social scale, without injury to the best interests of those above them." These are not the words of indiscriminating panegyric; their truthfulness will be as readily allowed by the political opponents of this truly good and great man, as by his most intimate and personal friends. Such was the native modesty of his character, that even in the times of his most triumphant successes he could sincerely declare that the applause of congregated thousands was to him no reward; and that he had to overcome a natural and inherent reluctance each time he addressed a public meeting, or even presented a petition to the House of Commons. Nothing, therefore, but the thorough conviction that he was rendering a service to his country led Cobden to take so prominent a part in the agitation for the repeal of the corn-laws; and how highly he estimated the benefit when the end was accomplished may be judged of by the following words, in which he alluded to Sir Robert Peel, when forced soon afterwards to resign by the adverse vote of the House. "If he has lost office, he has gained a country. For my part, I would rather descend into private life with that last measure of his, which has led to his discomfiture, in my hand, than mount to the highest pinnacle of human power."

Aware of the pecuniary sacrifices he had made, and fully appreciating the value of the public services he had rendered, his admirers throughout the country resolved to requite and honour Cobden in return; they

did so by subscribing and presenting to him the magnificent sum of £80,000. Part of this amount was laid out in the purchase of the house in which he was born, together with a small estate adjoining. The house, improved and enlarged, became Dunford House, his favourite residence. Here, amid the scenes of his childhood, he hospitably received strangers who came to him from all quarters; and here, in congenial pursuits, he spent the closing years of his life. What remained of the money was invested in American railway securities, which, though for a time unproductive, are now known to yield to his family a fair return. Lord John Russell having succeeded Sir Robert Peel as Prime Minister, Mr. Cobden was offered a seat in the new Cabinet. This, however, he declined; and, to recruit his health, weakened by the exertions of preceding years, he repaired to the Continent. Wherever he went, he was received with high honour. France, Spain, Italy, Germany, and Russia were among the countries he visited, and which vied with each other in complimentary banquets to the great free-trader.

Elected both for Stockport and the West Riding of Yorkshire during his absence, he chose to represent the larger constituency, which he continued to do until 1857. During the interval which elapsed between the repeal of the corn-laws and the Crimean War, Cobden devoted himself to the advocacy of a reduction in the national expenditure, and of arbitration as a means of settling international disputes. He was also deeply interested in the operations of the Peace Society, and did much to extend its influence and promote its aims. At the "congresses" of the society, held in Paris in 1849, Frankfurt in 1850, and London in 1851, he lent his powerful support to the doctrine of non-intervention. Writing to Joseph Sturge about this time, he attributed much of the progress of public opinion on these subjects to the efforts of the Peace Society. "In fact," he added, "all good things pull together—free-trade, peace, financial reform, equitable taxation—all are co-operating towards a common object." That common object was the mutual welfare and prosperity of nations, as based upon commercial intercourse and co-operation, and which may, in fact, be described as the great end sought by Cobden as a public man, shaping alike his principles as a politician and directing his aspirations as a man. On the question of the Russian War, as of the Chinese War in 1857, Mr. Cobden differed from the majority of his countrymen. Ministers, after having been defeated on the latter question, dissolved Parliament and appealed to the country. In common with Mr. Bright and others of his political allies he was excluded from the new Parliament. The leisure time thus given him was devoted to an extended tour in the United States. The government of Lord Derby, which had in the meantime succeeded to power, having been compelled to resign, Lord Palmerston, desirous of constructing a ministry on a broader basis than heretofore, wished Mr. Cobden to accept the office of President of the Board of Trade. He received the first intimation of this overture on his arrival at Liverpool. Again he felt it his duty to decline the proffered post, mainly on the ground of his insuperable objections to the principles of the Palmerstonian policy as pursued towards foreign countries. The electors of Rochdale having, in 1859, and while he was still in America, returned Mr. Cobden to Parliament, he continued the valued representative of that borough during the remainder of his life. In the autumn of that year, embracing the opportunity which presented itself, he accomplished another great undertaking, and rendered one more splendid service to his country. This

was his successful negotiation of the French Treaty. The difficulties to be overcome were numerous and formidable, but they were grappled and surmounted by the patience, tact, and resources of the English negotiator, sustained as he was by the cordial support of his French colleagues, and countenanced by the approval and co-operation of the Emperor Napoleon. The high estimation in which Mr. Cobden's exertions were regarded by our own government will best be shown in Mr. Gladstone's words, addressed to the House of Commons:—"With regard to Mr. Cobden," said the Chancellor of the Exchequer, "speaking as I do at a time when every angry passion has passed away, I cannot help expressing our obligations to him for the labour he has, at no small personal sacrifice, bestowed upon a measure which he, not the least among the apostles of free-trade, believes to be one of the most memorable triumphs free-trade has ever achieved. Rare is the privilege of any man, who, having fourteen years ago rendered to his country one signal service, now again, within the same brief span of life, decorated neither by rank nor title, bearing no mark to distinguish him from the people he loves, has been permitted to perform another great and memorable service to his sovereign and to his country." The French Treaty may well be named the crowning act of Cobden's political life. On his return from Paris Lord Palmerston offered him a baronetcy and a seat in the Privy Council; but these honours, true to the inherent modesty of his nature, he declined.

We have not been careful to particularize the occasions of what may be called Mr. Cobden's great appearances in Parliament, or to enumerate the publications by which he sought, from time to time, to impress his views upon the community; desiring rather to give prominence to what was more strictly personal and characteristic of the man than to detail his political contentions. It is pleasing to think of him in his seclusion at Dunford House, riding out in fine weather, or driving through the pleasant rural parishes of Heyshot and Graffham to the residence of the Bishop of Oxford, with whom he was on terms of cordial friendship. His correspondence was enormous, and indicated the cosmopolitan character of his mind, being maintained with persons in all parts of the world. It was his habit to rise at six in the morning to write his letters. "If the sky was cloudy or the weather broken," we quote from an appreciative writer, "he would often write till post-time, perhaps alternating his epistolary duties with reading some favourite author—a recreation of which he was never weary. Like a famous ancient, he was never less idle than when he was idle, nor ever less alone than when he was alone. The public are able to judge of his powers as a letter-writer—of that clearness and vigour of style which shone as brightly in his briefest notes as in his most studied speeches—but only a comparative few of the outer world have had the opportunity of being fascinated by his conversation, or feeling the magic spell which he cast around him in private life." To the same effect is the testimony of Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, who describes him as "of slender frame, with great ease and flexibility of movement, having the most frank and fascinating smile, and as one of those men who carry about with them an atmosphere of vivacity and social exhilaration."

Mr. Cobden had long suffered from weak health. An attack of bronchitis was the immediate cause of his death, which occurred in Suffolk Street, Pall Mall East, on Sunday morning, the 2nd April last. He had come to London with the intention of taking part in the discussions of

the House of Commons on the question of defence in the Canadas—a question in which he was deeply interested. The news of his death produced heartfelt regret in this country, and in other countries where his name was well-known and his character held in high esteem. Many were the tributes tendered to his memory and merits. In the “Corps Législatif” of France the death of Richard Cobden was spoken of as “not alone a misfortune for England, but a cause of mourning for France and for humanity.” In our own House of Commons Lord Palmerston, in particularizing the important services he had rendered, and in referring to his great talents and disinterested character, said, “We have lost a man who was peculiarly emblematic of the Constitution under which we live, because he rose to great eminence in this House, because he acquired ascendancy in the public mind, not in virtue of any family connections, but solely and entirely in consequence of the power and vigour of his mind, that power and vigour being applied to purposes eminently advantageous to his country.” Not less appreciative was the language of Mr. Disraeli, with whose words we fitly close the series of testimonies we have reproduced in this article to the noble career and lofty character of the great middle-class politician and free-trade champion. “There is this consolation,” said the Conservative leader, “when we remember the unequalled and irreparable losses of this Parliament, that those great men are not altogether lost to us, that their words will be often quoted in this House, that their example will often be referred to and appealed to, and that even their expressions will form part of our discussions and debates. There are, indeed, some members of Parliament, who, though they may not be present, are still members of this House, who are independent of dissolutions, of the caprices of constituencies, and even of the course of time. I think, sir, that Mr. Cobden was one of those men; and I believe that when the verdict of posterity shall be recorded upon his life and conduct, it will be said of him, that, looking to his expressions and his deeds, he was without doubt the greatest political character that the pure middle-class of this country has yet produced; that he was an ornament to the House of Commons, and an honour to England.”*

WHAT I SAW OF THE PEARL-FISHERY.

CHAPTER I.—CEYLON.

EARLY in the month of February 1859 I found myself in the streets of Colombo, in the Island of Ceylon. How I came there need not concern the reader at present, though I may say that ill-usage drove me to leave my ship without receiving the money due to me for wages.

The fear of being again put under the command of those I disliked prevented me from visiting that part of the town where the principal European residents of the place were dwelling, and I was compelled to acquire some knowledge of the inhabitants of that part of the city occupied by the descendants of the Dutch and Portuguese, and of the Pettah, or native quarter of Colombo.

The Pettah presented a fine school for acquiring some knowledge of the different races found in the East; for it then contained a population of about thirty-five thousand souls, including Malays, Moors, Lentoos, Parsees, and native Cingalese.

Amongst these people, all very busy in accomplishing but little, I was trying to live on nothing per diem.

* For the photograph from which our portrait is taken we are indebted to Mr. Downey, of Newcastle.

During the day I would wander about the city, and occasionally give its inhabitants a lesson in economy by consuming a pine-apple, shaddock, or mango that had been rejected by others.

In the evening I would walk out of town, where, undisturbed by its inhabitants, I could find a night's lodging in some cinnamon-garden or grove of cashew-nut trees. A man who lives in Ceylon must be industrious, and I recommend the place as a residence for any one who is constitutionally indolent, and wishes relief from the infirmity. Day and night existence demands a constant warfare against myriads of sand-flies and other annoyances, small in form, but great in the effect of disturbing repose.

My occupation of the cinnamon-gardens for a lodging was opposed by huge beetles, that often seemed trying to break their own heads or mine by dashing themselves against me. Large spiders seemed trying to catch, or rather bind me in their webs, which my exertions in fighting them and other foes were constantly breaking. Although these and many other things were apparently displeased with my presence in a place that should be exclusively their own, insects of smaller size had a high appreciation of the favour of my visit. Myriads of mosquitoes, thirsting for blood, were humming around me, ticks dropped or crawled from trees and buried their heads in my flesh, and land-leeches tried to drain the last drop of blood from my body.

Other things gathered near me, apparently to gratify a feeling of curiosity. Bats and moths flew about my ears, and great toads came crawling around me; while I was conscious that the ground upon which I was lying was alive with ants and a thousand other insects.

A soft bed of snow and a blanket of ice were all I then desired for perfect happiness; but such luxuries are not to be had in Ceylon. If I did wrong in leaving my ship, I was amply punished for it. In the frenzy of struggling to maintain an existence against the myriads of tormentors all anxious to impress upon me some record of their love and hatred, I arranged my frantic powers of thought into a resolution to take the first opportunity of getting once more upon the water. A small brig was about to sail for the Bay of Condatchy, and I joined it as one of the crew, with the promise that I should be employed in the pearl-fishery when the vessel reached its destination. It was the first chance I had of leaving Colombo; a better might have been found the same day, but I had acquired all the experience of a vagabond life in that city that I deemed necessary for future use, and would run no risk in enlarging it.

The brig belonged to a Colombo merchant, who had purchased at auction the right of fishing on an oyster-bed that had lately been surveyed and sold by the government. The vessel was freighted with stores for the use of those who had been engaged for the fishery, and was commanded by a native of Colombo, of Portuguese descent, named Manos. Aboard the brig were several men who had been engaged as divers. They were called *Marawas*, and were most of them natives of Tuticorum. They had no duty to perform on the vessel, and seldom spoke but to each other. A high opinion of their profession or business evidently made them above associating too freely with those who have never tried to make themselves amphibious; but why they had conceived this exalted opinion of themselves I was unable to learn.

Four days after leaving Colombo we anchored in the Bay of Condatchy, and I again found myself on the animated soil of Ceylon, where the insects were quite as

numerous, inquisitive, impertinent, and bloodthirsty as those of the place we had left.

We landed near a village containing about twelve hundred inhabitants—most of them miserable-looking wretches, and many of them apparently suffering evils from which death would seem a relief. Several were afflicted with the horrible disease of elephantiasis, and were moving about with what looked like elephants' legs. Others, afflicted with some cutaneous disease, were spotted like the hide of a tiger.

Every species of animal and vegetable life seemed in its proper home excepting man, who was apparently maintaining a miserable, uncertain existence in opposition to the efforts nature was making to remove him from the island.

CHAPTER II.—PEARL-FISHING.

We found Condatchy Bay the scene of much animation; for more than one hundred and fifty boats, principally from the Coromandel and Malabar coasts, had reached the bay; and their crews were making preparations for engaging in pearl-fishing, which was not to commence until the 16th of the month, three days after our arrival.

An oyster-bank is divided into five parts, only one of which is fished in a year, and each in turns. This prevents the bank from being completely stripped, and gives the young oysters a chance of reaching maturity. The right of fishing on certain portions of the bank is sold at auction to the highest bidder, and purchased by speculative merchants, who generally lose money in the business. This, however, does not prevent them from engaging in it, since there is a chance of a large fortune being made at it in one season.

Each fishing-boat is manned by twenty men, besides a *tindal*, or man acting as pilot, who has authority over all the others. Ten of the twenty men are divers; the others attend on them, pull the boat, and perform all other duties.

The oyster-banks off Condatchy are about twenty miles from the shore; and early on the evening of the 15th more than a hundred boats were manned by men anxiously waiting for the signal for them to start for their respective fishing-grounds.

At ten o'clock in the evening a gun was fired at Aripipo. It was a signal that the boats might start; and, setting a sail to catch the land-breeze, then fairly on its way for the sea, we started. I had consented to form one of the ten of a boat's crew, whose duty consisted in managing the boat and looking after the divers; and, on our first excursion out, Senhor Manos, who had commanded the brig, was our *tindal*, or pilot.

We reached our station a little before sunrise, and preparations were immediately commenced for business. The divers divested themselves of all clothing except a small piece of calico about the loins; and to a belt around the waist each fastened a small net to hold the oysters. Each had a piece of iron weighing about ten pounds, to which was tied a small line with a loop in which a foot could be inserted. These weights were to enable them to descend with greater rapidity to the bottom; for, as they could only remain under water from one minute and a half to two minutes, it was necessary that no time should be lost on the way down.

One end of the small line attached to the weight was retained in the boat, to enable us to recover the weight after the diver had reached the bottom and withdrawn his foot from the loop. Although there were ten divers in each boat, only five went over at a time. This enabled each to have a rest, and still kept the work constantly going on.

Each man before going over had placed around his body, under the arms, a line by which he could be pulled to the surface, the end of the line being held by one of the crew in the boat; and, as an additional precaution against danger, a line was hanging from the stem of the boat, and sunk with a weight to the bottom.

With a knife in one hand, and firmly grasping the nose with the other, five of our divers went over the side, and rapidly disappeared below, while those in the boats saw that the lines attached to their bodies ran out clear, and stood ready to pull them up, should the signal be given for us to do so.

This was the first work of the kind I had ever seen performed, and the minute and a half or more in which we waited for the shaking of the lines, which was the signal for us to haul up, seemed to me a period of nearly ten minutes.

All came up within a few seconds of each other, and each had not less than one hundred oysters in the net. The diver attached to the line I was holding was the first to make an appearance, and required much more force in pulling him up than what I thought was necessary; but as he reached the surface, the reason of this was immediately seen. He was bearing in his hands a mass of oysters adhering together that he had succeeded in detaching from a rock with his knife. The mass could not have weighed less than forty pounds.

The other five divers immediately went down; and in this way the work was carried on until noon, the divers having gone down about forty times each since the time they commenced in the morning. The sea breeze had then commenced blowing, and we started for the shore.

Thus far we had been fortunate; and yet there was a possibility that in the many bushels of oysters we had secured there might not be a pearl of the value of one shilling. But with this possibility there was another: the cargo we had procured might be worth five or ten thousand pounds.

On reaching the shore the oysters were taken from the boat, put into a pit, and then covered over with matting and some earth, there to die and decompose. The shells would then be open, when they would be picked over, and the pearls, if they contained any, would be extracted.

More than two thousand men had been at work on the banks that day, and many tons of oysters had been taken from their homes to die.

"What," thought I, "can be the real cause of this labour—this waste of time for a substance that is of no practical use to mankind?"

To many of those I had seen employed that day an answer to this question would have been very simple. They would have told me that they were working for money; but I looked beyond this for the real cause of their toil.

The conclusion at which I arrived may be wrong, perhaps worse—ungallant; for all this wicked waste of time I ascribed to the fact that ladies have vanity. From the result of this infirmity thousands of others have to suffer. It seems that the law of nature, that from the misfortunes of a few many must suffer, applies to pearl-oysters as well as human beings; for since being in the fishery I have learned that only oysters in ill-health produce pearls; yet the misfortunes of the afflicted bring all from their beds in the sea to the earth-pits to die.

CHAPTER III.—THE PILLAR KARRAS.

In the evening, after we had unloaded the boat, many reports reached us of the events of the day. All were favourable for the prospect of a good season at the

fishery; for we heard no complaints as to want of success in procuring oysters. Other reports, however, gave the fear that the business of procuring was to be followed with danger; for we heard of three or four encounters with sharks, in one of which a diver had been killed.

For each boat employed on the pearl banks there is a priest, whose business is to protect the divers from sharks. During the time the boats are out, these men are supposed to be engaged in prayers and other ceremonies thought necessary for the protection of those who have employed them. The pearl-divers will not work unless there is some one either in the boat or on shore who is paid by their employers for protecting them from sharks. The priests or conjurers are called Pillar Karras, or "binders of sharks;" and their exertions in behalf of the divers are certainly of great assistance; for the superstitious men place the utmost confidence in their labours, and the absence of fear is necessary in encountering any danger.

The Pillar Karras work very hard for the money they receive for their services, and the contortion of their bodies and features when engaged in their conjurations or prayers is painful to witness. Frequently, when a diver is killed by a shark, the priest employed to protect him from harm has to make a sudden departure from the scene of his labours to avoid the vengeance of the lost man's companions, who pronounce him an impostor, incapable of commanding or exercising the power necessary for protecting them from the enemy they fear.

So great is the superstition of the pearl-divers, that each firmly believes his preservation from day to day is wholly owing to the labours of the priest. They know that thousands of sharks are cruising the tropic seas where the occupation of pearl-diving is followed; they also know that this enemy to man and everything else is ever hungry; and they require no further exercise of reason to believe that the "shark-binders" have saved them from being devoured.

The Pillar Karras generally remain on shore, and during the time the divers are at work they must be constantly engaged in prayer. Should one of the Marawas be seized by a shark, it is fully believed by his companions that at that particular instant the priest was neglecting his duty, and that his thoughts for a moment have been turned upon some sinful theme, giving the shark an opportunity of seizing its victim.

Before we had been employed on the pearl banks a week, two incidents occurred that strongly confirmed the Marawas in their superstitious belief in the power of their priests.

There was a great commotion in a boat lying next to the one in which I was employed. The line attached to one of their divers commenced rapidly running out. All who witnessed this knew the cause, and the Marawas were pulled to the surface. One of them never appeared again. He had been taken away by a shark. The companions of the lost man, having no confidence in their Pillar Karras, would go under water no more that day; and the boat returned to shore, the Marawas in it cursing their "binder of sharks" for what they thought his criminal neglect, while those in our boat seemed very grateful for the good fortune that had given them a conjurer whose incantations had protected them from the evil that had befallen others so near by.

On reaching the shore in the evening we heard what the Marawas thought a satisfactory explanation of the reason why the diver had been lost. While energetically engaged in performing his duty, the Pillar Karras employed in protecting the divers belonging to the boat from which the man had been lost, had been bitten by a

cobra de capello, or hooded snake, and had died about three hours afterwards.

Here, in the opinion of the Marawas, was positive proof of the necessity of a Pillar Karras to protect them from their enemy. A priest had been interrupted in his ceremonies and prayers, and the consequence had been the loss of a life placed in his care. The priest was buried that evening by the men who had been cursing him but a few hours before for what they thought neglect of duty.

CHAPTER IV.—THE MARAWAS.

THE Marawas are generally quiet, inoffensive men, simple in their amusements and manner of living, and yet they are not easily induced to do anything against which they have the slightest objection.

The season in which fishing on the pearl banks is allowed only lasts six weeks, but in that time only about twenty-five days' work is performed by the divers.

Frequently all refuse to go out in the boats, and will give no reason for doing so. There is no use in trying to compel them, and all others have to wait their pleasure.

There is a great similarity in their appearance, and one is seldom met who possesses much character not common to others.

One of the divers of the boat to which I belonged was an exception to this rule; a man who looked and talked somewhat differently from his companions, and who with some of them was a little inclined to be quarrelsome. Uneven in disposition, he was also fond of playing practical jokes. When this man, who was called Latta, was in one of his merry moods, he often seriously interrupted our work, and by his conduct brought upon himself the ill-will of his companions.

Usually when a diver first reaches the bottom there will be a few feet of slack to the line attached to his body. A favourite amusement of Latta's was to shake the rope fastened to one of his companions in such a manner that the motion would be perceptible to those above, while the person to whom it was attached would know nothing of its having been agitated. This would be a signal for those above to haul up the line; and, knowing that the man had just gone down, they would suppose the signal would not be given without some good reason, and would lose no time in bringing the man to the surface.

The astonished diver who had given no signal, and in ignorance that any had been given, would find himself dragged up immediately after coming down, and would use some strong Malabar language in expressing his opinion of those who had been exerting themselves in obeying the signal. Here would be a fine opportunity for a controversy, which was never lost.

The diver would swear that he had not given a signal, and we in the boat would be as certain that he had. On one occasion, when the same man had been suddenly pulled up twice within an hour, Senhor Manos, the *tindal*, was strongly impressed with the fear that he should have to take the lives of two men, to prevent them from killing each other. Latta was at last detected in his amusement, and emphatically threatened with death should he again offend in the same manner.

Before we had been three weeks on the banks this man had made an enemy of nearly every other belonging to the boat; but an enemy more merciless than man was in search of Latta. It found him one day, and he was seen no more. He was taken away by a shark, and his loss was further proof to our Marawas of the power and wisdom of the conjurer retained for their special use. Latta they pronounced unworthy of the priest's

care, alleging that he had therefore been allowed to meet the fate of the unprotected.

So inconsistent are the thoughts of the superstitious divers, that the loss of Latta apparently inspired our Maravias with more confidence in the power of the Pillar Karras to save them. Had the shark selected another, our priest in their opinion would have deserved some severe punishment; but, as the one who had been taken away was disliked, all were noisy in praise of the wonderful man who, at the distance of twenty miles from a shark, had not prevented it from getting a dinner.

Our business was followed until the 1st of April, the end of the season, without further loss of life, and with great success in procuring oysters. To all there had been some excitement, much amusement, and very good pay; yet none seemed to regret that the season was over.

The last few days that we were off Condatchy were made very unpleasant, while on or near the shore, by the stench from the pits of decomposing oysters. By the time we were ready to leave, this became so offensive that I was well pleased at getting under way in the brig with Captain Manos, for the purpose of making another visit to Colombo.

The result of the speculation of the merchant who had employed us I never learned; for before it was known in Colombo I had sailed from that part of the world, delighted with the hope that I might never see it again.

THE INFLUENCE OF RELIGION ON EARLY ENGLISH LITERATURE.

For centuries the English people had been struggling to preserve their ecclesiastical independence. From the date of the visit of Augustin the Anglo-Saxon Church had retained doctrines which were not acceptable to the papal priesthood. Our monarchs, moreover, had always held the right to exercise some control over ecclesiastical appointments, and had therein been supported by the feeling of the nation. The spirit that had showed itself in this form was strengthened by the immorality and idleness of the monastic orders. Hence religious discussion was peculiarly welcome. Devotional poetry, and satirical poetry on religious themes, especially on the manners of the clergy, popular throughout Europe, were specially so in England; and even books on religious truth found readers among most classes. The influence of this taste on the vocabulary of the language was soon apparent. Anglo-Saxon words expressive of religious and moral thought had been numerous enough in the earlier stages of that tongue, but these had now become obsolete. It was therefore necessary to introduce words of Latin origin—Wycliffe's practice—and by the circulation of such works the words themselves became familiar to a much greater extent than would have been possible with a literature that failed to appeal to popular sympathy. Indeed it has been thought by competent authorities that the wide diffusion of religious inquiry and of religious teaching did more to popularize new words in England during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries than all other causes besides. Of secular poems and secular histories but few copies seem to have been made, even the "Ormulum" existing so far as we now know in a single ms., while of "Piers Ploughman" and of "Wycliffe's Translation" many scores, and probably hundreds, were circulated among the people.

In most Protestant countries the national literature has commenced with the translation of the Scriptures into the tongue of the common people, which tongue the

translation has fixed and preserved for all aftertime. This remark is true of Luther's German Bible, of the Danish Bible of 1550, and of the English versions of Wycliffe and Tyndale. The fact is generally admitted; nor is the explanation difficult to find. Most of these versions were made at a time when the vernacular language in each case was characterized by simplicity, both in the words and in the combination of them. That language was therefore a better exponent of the original than more modern speech. They were made, moreover, when the mind of the translator and of the reader were in a state of great religious sensibility, and rejoicing in newly acquired freedom and in newly discovered truth. Add to these causes another,—the translator himself generally felt the responsibility of his office, and girded up his mind to his task. Hence it is not surprising to be told that Wycliffe's New Testament is far superior in its English to his theological writings; superior in simplicity and purity and dignity, in all the elements, in short, that make a translation popular, and fit it to react upon the vocabulary and language of a nation.

With Wycliffe the religious dialect of this country may be said to have become fixed. For five hundred years it has continued through Tyndale and the authorized version of 1611 to be the language of devotion and of Scriptural translation. In our own day it remains practically unchanged. Any Englishman of common education will understand Wycliffe's New Testament; and if Wycliffe were now to reappear amongst us, it is probable that he would understand our authorized version, and need but few explanations.

The grammatical peculiarities of the version are that *th* is confined to the third person singular of verbs, and is never used in the imperative or the plural; that *ye* or *you* is never used as a singular; that participles end generally in *ing* not in *ende*, the old form; and that feminine nouns which in the Anglo-Saxon end in *ster* (danster, stayster), now end in *esse* (daunseresse, devoursesse), the classic feminine form. As the version was from the Vulgate, a large number of words of Latin origin are for the first time introduced into our speech.

It is worth noticing, by the way, that in England the language of theology and of religion was for many centuries in a more advanced state of culture than that of secular prose. The vocabulary was more extensive and the diction more polished. This was largely owing to the excellence of Wycliffe's translation. But it was also owing to the fact that the most earnest men of the nation were theologians, even when they were also statesmen. As the time of the Reformation drew on, the study of theology became a necessity. It was to the men of literary culture what the study of political history and of public economy is in our own day. It was the natural completion of education, the preparation of public men for public life. Theological books were read by lawyers and by statesmen of all parties. When the Reformation was established, moreover, many of the public teachers of England were of German, Swiss, and Dutch birth, and many Englishmen visited the Continent, driven sometimes by persecution, drawn sometimes by love. This intercourse largely increased the number of Latinized and foreign words, and preserved to theological language the influence it had already gained. This superiority it retained down to the Restoration of Charles II. From that date theology itself declined in public estimation, and its language lost in a single generation all its earlier pre-eminence over the language of secular life.*

* "The Handbook of English Literature." By Joseph Angus, M.A., D.D. Religious Tract Society.

Varieties.

YESSO: A TRIP INTO THE INTERIOR.—The following extract is from a letter received from Hakodadi, North Japan. Our correspondent is the author of the valuable papers which appeared in "The Leisure Hour" of 1865 on the Ainos, the primitive inhabitants of the Japanese Islands. "Although the latter end of October was somewhat late for a trip into the interior of Yesso, I could not withstand the wish of showing this part of Japan, even at the close of the summer, to a friend just arrived from Europe. We journeyed on horseback, followed by several Japanese attendants, with pack-horses carrying provisions, bedding, &c., as we were out on an eight days' trip. The nights were cold, although during the day the weather was beautiful and mild. Our first halt was at Ono, a village through which all the inland produce of Yesso passes, about twelve miles from Hakodadi, the principal port of Yesso. Several lakes are in the vicinity, said to abound with fish of various kinds; but we were unsuccessful in our attempts to get specimens, although my friend persevered for several hours. We were rather more successful with our rifles, and brought down a few wild geese. We next reached another large village called Mauri, near to Volcano Bay. After passing the beautiful Volcano Lakes we rode through an immense forest. Here we met with a number of Ainos, and treated these poor beings to a plentiful meal of Japanese 'chow chow.' A report now reached us that one of our pack-horses had been killed by a bear in crossing the mountains. You can imagine that this fired our ambition to get up a bear-hunt; and, having examined our rifles, we mounted our horses full of zeal for an encounter with the grizzly foe. An hour's gallop brought us to the spot where lay the poor dead horse—at least, all that was left of his carcass. However, our thanks were due to Bruin for having kindly left us the panniers of provisions, &c., untouched. Having refreshed ourselves with some of their contents, we gave our horses in charge of our attendants, and proceeded on foot through forests and difficult passes. It proved a long and useless hunt: no bear made its appearance. Tired and disheartened, we retraced our steps back from where we had started, casting a look of regret at the remains of the late useful animal, and, remounting, we hastened back to Mauri. On the following morning we passed on to Skabé, another village close to the volcano, and proceeded on to Kakooni. This proved a fatiguing and difficult journey, partly along the sea-shore, and over mountains steep and stony. Passing close to the volcano, we crossed an immense tract of land or desert devoid of vegetation, and covered with lava and pumice-stone. The great eruption which took place some fifteen years ago devastated a large part of the island. It was interesting to observe in some deep clefts, affording natural sections for geological inspection, alternate layers or strata of lava and black earth, clearly showing that numerous and dreadful eruptions must have taken place at long intervals in former ages. We arrived at Kakooni (after having been thirteen hours in the saddle), a place celebrated for its excellent sulphur baths. These baths are much frequented by the Japanese of all ages, young and old, male or female. The heat of the water and the amount of sulphur it contains is such that this spring would be a mine of wealth if found in Europe. Yesso is rich in other mineral wealth. After two days, we turned our horses' heads towards Hakodadi, crossing mountain ridges from which we enjoyed many views of imposing grandeur.

"J. J. E."

TRAFFIC ON THAMES BRIDGES.—The number of foot-passengers who passed over Southwark bridge for a period of six months, from the 6th November, 1864, to 7th May, 1865, gives a daily average of 12,963, while on London Bridge there passes on an average daily 95,000; over Blackfriars, 48,500; and over Westminster, 47,000. The carriage and other traffic is in about the same relative proportion—viz., Southwark, 2737; London, 22,972; Blackfriars, 12,532; Westminster, 13,119.

CHRISTIAN MISSIONS.—Some have said, "Charity begins at home;" it does so, but it does not end there. The duty of contributing to make others better than they are, and to spread a knowledge of the Gospel in foreign lands, is really not a matter of voluntary bounty or free will. A debt lies upon us which we must all discharge according to our means. Let us go over our own dear island, and look at the stately cathedrals and the churches of every village. Look at the schools and colleges, and the ships in our ports, and covering the seas; at the stately cities, at the artisans with their power, at the

numerous centres of industry and civilization; at the literature which we possess, the delights of our homes, the enjoyment of the knowledge of what there is in womanhood and in childhood, and the love which binds us all together. These are the fruits of the preaching of missionaries to those benighted savages in whose country and in whose places we now are. Well, then, do we not owe a debt? There are savages like these still living. The regions of Africa and Asia and the islands of the sea are full of them. What should we be now if we were to depart from the Gospel of Christ? We should be savages of the worst kind, armed with that knowledge which devils may possess, but without those gifts and graces which alone give value to empire, power, wealth, arts, or civilization. Christianity alone makes these of worth. The Chinese, the Hindoos, the Mahomedans of Asia are civilized; but the atrocities and vices which prevail among them, their disregard of life, and want of natural affection, make us feel that civilization on these terms is no gift of value to man. Almost within the memory of ourselves—certainly within the recollection of our forefathers—a great neighbouring nation did for a time cast off even the outward profession of Christianity; that time will be known to all posterity as the Reign of Terror in France. The value of those good things which we possess is derived from the possession of that best thing of all, the knowledge of the Gospel. It cannot be doubtful that to us as a nation has been given the great prominence we have in commerce, wealth, and arts, for that we should do good to mankind. Upon these terms alone may we hope to continue to hold it; and on no other terms would it be desirable that we or any other nation should possess it.—*Speech of the Attorney-General, Sir Roundell Palmer.*

THE CATTLE PLAGUE.—In what has been written on this subject, little reference has been made to the outbreak of the same disease in 1714. A royal commission was then as now appointed; the president was Mr. Bates, F.R.S., surgeon to the royal household. His report was read before the Royal Society, and will be found in the "Philosophical Transactions." In the symptoms of the disease, and in the *post-mortem* appearances, there is wonderful similarity to what is reported at the present time. Mr. Bates records that every remedy was unavailing, and every form of treatment attempted without perceptible result; and that the plague was at last stayed by dividing the herds into small lots, with complete isolation, so that if one lot was attacked the others might not be infected. The dead cattle were burned or buried with quicklime, to encourage which the king, George I, granted a sum from his own privy purse for every animal thus destroyed. Many thousands perished in the home countries. Nothing is said in the report of the commissioner about the plague being imported from abroad; in fact the Russian disease or the Rinderpest was then unknown, and was first described by Gmelin half a century later. The origin of the complaint remained involved in mystery. Mr. Bates mentions that the cowkeepers noticed the extreme drought of the preceding spring, when the cattle had not their usual purgation from the "frimness" of the grass. The later outbreak of 1746 and succeeding years has been frequently referred to in the newspapers.

SENSATIONAL LITERATURE.—At the East-end of London almost all the murder and highwayman literature of the past sixty years is being republished and sold in penny numbers. In tobacconists' shop windows up dirty courts and alleys this literature may be seen suspended between canisters and briar-roots on strings. The woodcuts are of the Blueskin and Jonathan Wild stamp—slouching fellows with big boots, black masks, and gory poniards flashing high above the victims' heads. "Robinson Crusoe" has just been republished in penny portions, and illustrated after the fashion; but it does not seem to be very popular. "It ain't strong enough, sir," answered a newsagent in reply to a question put to him.—*London Review.*

FOREIGN DYNASTIES.—It is singular that throughout Europe the reigning dynasties are of foreign extraction. In England, a German rules; in France, a Corsican; in Spain, a Bourbon; in Italy, one who is held a foreigner by the majority of his subjects; in Austria, a Spaniard; in Sweden, a Frenchman; Belgium and Prussia have no indigenous monarchs. In Greece there was lately a Bavarian, and now a Dane; in Constantinople, a Mongolian.